

Overview

As part of the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) movement, employees are bringing their own devices into the workplace and driving the type of devices supported by IT organizations. Easy-to-use consumer devices and cloud applications have set the standard for the end-user experience.

Applications need to support a wide variety of platforms and devices as well as provide a rich web-based experience. Organizations today are looking for cost effective solutions that are designed for today's always connected user who wants a personal cloud of their data and applications.

Zimbra Collaboration provides a next-generation solution that connects end users to their personal cloud and critical data on any device or platform. Zimbra also simplifies management by offering IT administrators a web-based administration console, reduced administration and management and portability across private and provider clouds.

Zimbra's open source architecture is designed for virtualization, making it simpler to manage and more cost effective to scale. It is an open and extensible collaboration platform that allows IT to support all clients and operating systems seamlessly, and easily integrates with third-party platforms and applications.

This summary will primarily focus on comparing Zimbra with Microsoft Exchange 2013 and Outlook.

Key Reasons for Zimbra

High Quality Online & Offline User Experience

Zimbra is supported across all major browsers (Safari, Internet Explorer, Firefox and Chrome). Zimbra users have a rich and consistent experience as they use the Zimbra web client across different browsers, increasing user satisfaction and reducing support costs and user training.

Microsoft Exchange provides an inconsistent user experience when users move from the Outlook client

to the web client, OWA, and across web browsers. For example, OWA premium is not available for Chrome on Mac or Linux. As users move from the Outlook client to the web client, there are two versions of OWA depending on the browser and platform – Premium and Light, and many of the plug-ins available in the Outlook client are not available in OWA. Premium OWA provides the closest user experience to the Outlook client but OWA Light still lacks some of the features in OWA premium, such as the tasks module, reminders, HTML composing of messages, viewing your calendar one week at time and more.

Access Zimbra from Any Device

Users access Zimbra using the Zimbra web client. Additional support is also provided for:

- **Zimbra web client**
High quality, rich and consistent experience for users supported across all major browsers and on Mac, Linux or Windows desktops.
- **Outlook**
Users who do not want to use the Zimbra web client have the option to use Outlook.
- **Third-party email clients**
Zimbra supports open standards and can be accessed by third-party email clients that support IMAP, POP, CardDAV and CalDAV.
- **Smartphones and tablets**
Smartphones such as iPhone, Android or Windows-based and Blackberry smartphones are supported. Zimbra can also be accessed via tablets that support ActiveSync and/or through the mobile browser.

Microsoft Exchange does not provide a consistent experience between the Outlook desktop client and the web client, OWA. Additionally, the Outlook client experience is different on a Mac than on the traditional Windows platform. Microsoft eliminated Entourage and added Outlook for Mac to Office 2011 but users who have worked with Outlook on Windows will find that the workflow is different and it takes many more steps to do the same tasks on Outlook for Mac than Outlook for Windows. From a forum users' point of view, there are many features missing in Outlook for Mac.

Rich Extensibility with Zimlets

As the business environment becomes more competitive, organizations need to be able to leverage other applications within their ecosystem to help users be more productive and make operations more effective. The Zimbra web client and administration interface can be extended through the use of Zimlets. Some Zimlets are shipped with the product. Customers can also download and review a wide variety of other Zimlets from the Zimlet Gallery or create their own Zimlets.

Outlook plug-ins are common, although many Outlook plug-ins are not available for OWA or do not work very reliably due to limitations in the APIs for OWA. For example, Salesforce has a plug-in for Outlook but does not have one for OWA.

Different Outlook client side plug-ins can also be incompatible, causing error messages or the client to crash. This is because Outlook users can download and install their own plug-ins in addition to installing corporate mandated plug-ins, resulting in many support calls. Zimlets for the Zimbra web client are installed on the Zimbra server and can be tested to ensure compatibility before deploying in production. More importantly, each Zimlet can be secured in the access control list and be enabled or disabled for a user or group of users customizing the user experience appropriately for each user.

Built for the Private and Public Cloud

Highly available and scalable solution

Zimbra provides a scalable solution that has integrated high availability, backup and disaster recovery. Zimbra integrates with the application monitoring APIs in most virtualization and storage platforms providing critical Zimbra application heartbeat services. This provides end-to-end availability for all application components and the underlying infrastructure. Zimbra also supports multi-tenancy and hierarchical storage management. Multi-tenancy enables Service Providers to cost effectively support a variety of businesses in a hosted environment while hierarchical storage management optimizes storage costs through tiered storage.

Flexible Storage Options

Zimbra enables organizations to plug and play with today's infrastructure of choice, supporting a hardware independent model, allowing organizations to choose the best storage servers that fit the business requirements and available budget. Zimbra supports all disk types and connectivity, from cheap commodity direct attached storage (DAS) to Network File System (NFS) and Storage Area Networks (SAN).

Zimbra also provides a platform that will easily scale. Administrators can effortlessly configure and manage storage, and provide further storage flexibility with storage virtualization solutions and virtual storage appliances.

Enables IT-as-a-Service (ITaaS)

Cloud applications and infrastructure have not only changed the expectations of end users, they have also provided executives with granular visibility into the cost of running a data center. IT organizations are now being challenged to run their data centers as cost effectively as their counterparts in the cloud. Zimbra continues to make enhancements to drive down administration and management overhead to enable IT-as-a-Service. Zimbra has an easy-to-use, web-based administration console enabling administrators to securely access the application anywhere, anytime.

In parallel, Zimbra continues to invest in end user self-service administration to reduce administration and support overhead and increase end user satisfaction. This empowers end users to perform simple tasks that were typically owned by IT administrators. Reduced overhead allows administrators to focus on more strategic tasks that align to the business needs.

Zimbra also supports policy-driven administration, enabling administrators to manage access and policies for a diverse set of users across a large organization. The Zimbra security model also enables Zimbra to accommodate a wide range of business scenarios while keeping the deployment simple and requiring minimal administration.

Microsoft Exchange 2013 includes database availability groups (DAG) providing high availability (HA) only for the Exchange mail server and not for the entire

Exchange application infrastructure in environments where server roles are distributed (e.g., no failover for the CAS or HUB transport server). DAG cannot be reused for any other applications resulting in knowledge that cannot be reused. Zimbra provides ubiquitous failover for all email and messaging components. Zimbra's use of platform-agnostic technology enables administrators to leverage their Zimbra knowledge supporting high availability for other applications and for processes to be driven by the criticality of the application. In Zimbra, HA procedures and knowledge are not tied to a specific application.

Microsoft also suggests that DAG can be used with inexpensive commodity direct attached storage, bringing down the overall cost for Exchange but gains in storage costs are not comparable to the significant increase in costs to support and maintain storage for Exchange. There are operational challenges to expand volumes and storage as well as replicate the data for high availability and disaster recovery.

Microsoft Exchange does not support all storage Types, such as NFS. Choice of storage is limited to storage types supported by Exchange whereas Zimbra abstracts the storage, enabling storage options to be independent of the application and to be driven by business requirements.

Deployment options for Exchange are also limited to native install on the hardware or virtualization. Zimbra supports both deployment options as well as the additional option of a software virtual appliance. Flexible deployment options enable organizations to better match the deployment option with business requirements.

Summary

Zimbra has thousands of customers using Zimbra in production environments and the customer base continues to grow rapidly in more than 135 countries. Customers range from small organizations with less than 25 people to large enterprise organizations with thousands of users and consumer service providers with millions of users.

Zimbra gives users a consistent rich web experience across platforms online/offline, can be easily integrated with other applications and data, provides a superior email and collaboration platform over Microsoft Exchange with DAG or Microsoft Exchange on any virtualization platform. Zimbra delivers high availability for all application components and underlying infrastructure with flexible storage options through your choice of the best competing storage and virtualization platforms. Zimbra delivers a next-generation, enterprise ready email and collaboration solution.